



Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (MDH2E)
is a partnership of:

Maryland Hospital Association (MHA),
Maryland Nurses Association (MNA),
Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE),
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH),
University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMDSO),
Health Care Without Harm (HCWH), and
Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E).

The purpose of the MDH2E Program is to educate Maryland health care facilities about the significant environmental impacts of the health care industry and the potential solutions. MDH2E provides the resources and technical support necessary for Maryland healthcare facilities to implement pollution prevention (P2) programs that can save money, reduce liability and increase compliance while meeting MDH2E's goals.

MDH2E was developed in support of the national Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E) Program and its goals, which include:

- Elimination of mercury from healthcare by 2005;
- Reduction of healthcare sector waste (nationwide) by 33% by 2005 and 50% by 2010;
- Identification, minimization and elimination of hazardous chemicals and persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances.

Note: These are voluntary goals for the entire industry, and individual facilities are committing to do only their part in moving toward these national goals.

Mercury in Maryland

Although mercury is a naturally occurring element, more than two-thirds of the mercury in the atmosphere comes from human-made products and energy production activities such as coal-fired utility and incinerator emissions. Nationwide, medical waste incinerators were ranked as the number four source of mercury emissions. In Maryland, sources of mercury air emissions include power plants (43%), municipal waste combustors (31%), medical waste incinerators (19%), and Portland cement plants (6%). Maryland has imposed statewide fish consumption advisories for several species of fish due to methylmercury contamination and there are a number of bodies of water that are not meeting water quality standards due to mercury contamination.

By working with MDH2E to phase out the use of mercury in healthcare, Maryland hospitals can drastically reduce their contribution to air pollution and fish contamination.



Maryland

Hospitals
for a
Healthy
Environment



What are we asking your hospital to do?

We are asking your healthcare facility to become a Partner in the H2E Program. You can sign up online at: http://www.h2e-online.org/programs/partner/p_regform.cfm. In becoming an H2E Partner, your facility is committing to work toward the H2E goals outlined above. In turn, MDH2E and the national H2E Program commit to helping your facility benchmark your programs, record progress and provide resources and technical assistance to get programs underway. In addition, you will gain access to Maryland-specific resources on recycling, regulated medical waste reduction, pharmaceutical waste, etc., a listing on MDH2E's web-page, free teleconferences, as well as the opportunity to highlight your commitment to environmental and public health in your community.

Why now?

As an awareness of healthcare's contribution to environmental degradation grows, the regulatory/compliance community is placing a growing emphasis on the healthcare sector. The H2E Program offers hospitals an opportunity to voluntarily work to increase their compliance while systematically improving their environmental performance and making crucial cost reductions. H2E is also working in partnership with the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Healthcare Compliance Assistance Center to provide increased support and recognition for environmental programs.

Participation in Maryland

As of September 2004, there are 11 participants in Maryland:

Civista Medical Center in LaPlata,
Deborah Morris & Associates in Owings Mills,
Dorchester General Hospital in Cambridge,
Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic States,
Memorial Hospital at Easton,
Malcolm Grow Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base,
Montgomery General Hospital in Olney,
National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda,
St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson,
Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, and
Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center at NIH, DHHS in Bethesda.

MDH2E aims to expand membership and create a network of hospital contacts within Maryland that can share information, resources and experience related to tackling some of the more challenging pollution prevention issues while working to fulfill the national goals of H2E.

For more information about MDH2E or the national H2E Program,
Contact:

Cecilia DeLoach, Hospitals for a Healthy Environment
phone: 800-727-4179, or e-mail: cecilia.deloach@h2e-online.org
Laura Armstrong, Maryland Department of the Environment
phone: 800-633-6101, ext. 4119, or e-mail: larmstrong@mde.state.md.us

